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Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal

Solemn appeal made by the President of the General Assembly on 1 September 2000 in connection with the observance of the Olympic Truce

The President of the General Assembly has the honour to make the following solemn appeal in connection with the observance of the Olympic Truce:

On 24 November 1999, the General Assembly adopted resolution 54/34, in which it urged Member States to observe the Olympic Truce during the games of the XXVII Olympiad, which will be held at Sydney, Australia, from 15 September to 1 October 2000.

The idea of the Olympic Truce dates back to an ancient Greek tradition of *ekecheiria*, in keeping with which all hostilities would cease during the Games.

Today, the Olympic Truce has become an expression of mankind's desire to build a world based on the rules of fair competition, peace, humanity and reconciliation. Moreover, the Olympic Truce epitomizes a bridge from the old and wise tradition to the most compelling purpose of the United Nations — the maintenance of international peace and security. As the most visible illustration of this connection in goals and aspirations between the Olympic movement and the United Nations, the flag of the United Nations now flies at all competition sites of the Olympic Games.

The forthcoming Sydney Games — the first Olympic Games of the twenty-first century and of the new millennium — should be a harmonious, athlete-oriented and environmentally committed event. The period of the Games, and beyond, should provide an opportunity for dialogue, reconciliation and the search for durable solutions for the restoration of peace in all areas of conflict, where the first victims are the children, the youth and women.

Humanity's quest is for a world free of hatred and war, a world where ideals of peace, goodwill and mutual respect form the basis of relations among countries. That goal may still remain elusive, but if the Olympic Truce can help us to bring about even a brief respite from conflict and strife, it will send a powerful message of hope to the international community. With the United Nations flag flying in Sydney

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at the XXVII Olympic Games, adherence to the Truce will gain even greater symbolism.

I therefore solemnly appeal to all States to demonstrate their commitment to the spirit of fraternity and understanding among peoples by observing the Olympic Truce during the Sydney Games.

I urge all those who are now engaged in armed struggle — for whatever reasons and wherever it might be — to suspend hostilities in keeping with the observance. I urge everybody, individually and collectively, to take the initiative to abide by the Olympic Truce as a way of promoting goodwill and encouraging the peaceful settlement of conflicts in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.